

Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament

These Rules have been adapted from the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament. They shall apply to all parliamentary sessions held during the simulation, including committee meetings (see Rule 22). Members of parliament should familiarize themselves with all Rules and keep a copy of this document on hand during all sessions. Officers of Parliament, as well as political group chairs and vice-chairs, bear particular responsibility for following the Rules of Procedure.

CHAPTER I: OFFICERS OF PARLIAMENT

Rule 1 - Oldest member

1. At the sitting held for the purpose of electing the President, the oldest Member present shall take the Chair until the President has been elected.
2. No business shall be transacted while the oldest Member is in the Chair unless it is concerned with the election of the President.

Rule 2 - Nominations and general provisions

1. The President, Vice-President, and Rapporteur shall be elected by show of hands. Nominations may only be made by a political group or two thirds of non-attached Members.
2. In the election of the President, Vice-President, and Rapporteur, account should be taken of the need to ensure broad representation of Member States and political views.

Rule 3 - Election of President and opening address

1. The President shall be elected first. Nominations shall be handed before each ballot to the oldest Member, who shall announce them to Parliament. Each nominee may speak for no more than two minutes in support of his or her candidacy. If after one ballot no candidate has obtained an absolute majority of the votes cast, the second ballot shall be confined to the two Members who have obtained the highest number of votes in the first ballot. In the event of a tie the elder candidate shall be declared elected.
2. As soon as the President has been elected, the oldest Member shall vacate the Chair. Only the elected President may deliver an opening address.

CHAPTER II: GENERAL RULES FOR THE CONDUCT OF SITTINGS

Rule 4 - Calling speakers and content of speeches

1. No Member may speak unless called upon to do so by the President. Members shall speak from their places and shall address the Chair; the President may invite them to come to the rostrum.
2. If a speaker departs from the subject, the President shall call him or her to order. If a speaker has already been called to order twice in the same debate, the President may, on the third occasion, forbid him or her to speak for the remainder of the debate on the same subject.
3. A speaker may not be interrupted except by the President. He or she may, however, by leave of the President, give way during his or her speech to allow another Member to put a question to him or her on a particular point in his or her speech.

Rule 5 - Allocation of speaking time

1. The President may propose to Parliament that speaking time be allocated for a particular debate. Parliament shall decide on this proposal without debate.
2. Speaking time shall be divided equally among all the political groups; non-attached Members shall be considered as one political group for this purpose.

3. No Member may speak for more than one minute on procedural motions.
4. The President shall ensure that these speaking times are respected.

Rule 6 - List of speakers

1. The names of Members who ask leave to speak shall be entered in the list of speakers in the order in which their requests are received.
2. The President shall call upon Members to speak, ensuring as far as possible that speakers of different political views are heard in turn.
3. No Member may speak more than twice on the same subject, except by leave of the President.
4. Members of the Commission shall be heard only at the request of a Member and by leave of the President.

Rule 7 - Order in the Chamber

1. The President shall call to order any Member who creates a disturbance during the proceedings.
2. Should the offence be repeated, the President shall again call the Member to order, and the fact shall be recorded in the minutes of proceedings.
3. If a further offence is committed, the President may exclude the offender from the Chamber for the remainder of the sitting.

CHAPTER III: VOTING

Rule 8 - Tied votes

1. Where there is a tied vote, the text or proposal shall be deemed rejected.

Rule 9 - Order of voting on amendments

1. Amendments shall have priority over the text to which they relate and shall be put to the vote before that text.
2. If two or more mutually exclusive amendments have been tabled* to the same part of a text, the amendment that departs furthest from the original text shall have priority and shall be put to the vote first. If it is adopted the other amendments shall stand rejected. If it is rejected, the amendment next in priority shall be put to the vote and similarly for each of the remaining amendments. Where there is doubt as to priority, the President shall decide. If all amendments are rejected, the original text shall be deemed adopted unless a separate vote has been requested by a political group or two thirds of non-attached Members.
3. If four or more amendments relating to the same text have been tabled, the President may put the original text to the vote first, or put to the vote before the amendment that departs furthest from the original text an amendment that is closer to the original text. If either of these secures a majority, all other amendments tabled to the same text shall fall.
4. Exceptionally, on a proposal from the President, amendments tabled after the close of the debate may be put to the vote if they are compromise amendments, or if there are technical problems. The President shall obtain the agreement of Parliament to putting such amendments to the vote.

Rule 10 - Voting

1. Normally Parliament shall vote by show of hands.
2. If the President decides that the result is doubtful, a fresh vote shall be taken by sitting and standing.

* Note: In EU English "to table" an amendment means to move it for debate, not, as in American English, to kill it.

3. The result of the vote shall be recorded.

Rule 11 - Voting by roll call

1. The vote shall be taken by roll call if so requested by a political group or two thirds of non-attached Members.
2. The roll shall be called in alphabetical order, beginning with the name of a Member drawn by lot. The President shall be the last to be called to vote. Voting shall be by word of mouth and shall be expressed by "Yes", "No", or "I abstain". In calculating whether a motion has been adopted or rejected account shall be taken only of votes cast for and against. The President shall establish the result of the vote and announce it.

Rule 12 - Explanations of vote

1. Once the general debate has been concluded, any Member may give an oral explanation on the final vote for not longer than one minute. Any political group may give an explanation of vote lasting not more than two minutes. No further requests to give explanations of vote shall be accepted once the first explanation of vote has begun.
2. Explanations of vote shall not be admissible in cases of votes on procedural matters. *Explanations of vote must have a direct bearing on the text being put to the vote.*

Rule 13 - Disputes on voting

1. The President shall declare votes open and closed.
2. Once the President has declared a vote open, no one except the President shall be allowed to speak until the vote is declared closed.
3. Points of order concerning the validity of a vote may be raised after the President has declared it closed.
4. The President shall decide whether the result announced is valid. His or her decision shall be final.

Rule 14 - Tabling and moving amendments

1. Any member may table amendments for consideration in the committee responsible. Amendments for consideration in Parliament may be tabled by the committee responsible, a political group, or two thirds of non-attached Members. Amendments shall be tabled in writing and signed by their authors.
2. An amendment may seek to change any part of a "Be it hereby resolved" clause, and may be directed to deleting, adding or substituting words or figures.
3. An amendment may be moved during the debate by its author or by any other Member appointed by the author to replace him or her.
4. Where an amendment is withdrawn by its author, it shall fall.

Rule 15 - Admissibility of amendments

1. No amendment shall be admissible if:
 - a) it does not directly relate to the "Be It Hereby Resolved" clause it seeks to amend;
 - b) it seeks to delete or replace the whole of a "Be It Hereby Resolved" clause;
 - c) it seeks to amend more than one of the individual articles or paragraphs of the text to which it relates. This provision shall not apply to compromise amendments nor to amendments which seek to make identical changes to a particular form of words throughout the text;
2. An amendment shall lapse if it is inconsistent with decisions previously taken on the text during the same vote.
3. The President shall decide whether amendments are admissible.

CHAPTER IV: INTERRUPTIVE AND PROCEDURAL MOTIONS

Rule 16 - Procedural motions

1. Requests to move a procedural motion, namely:
 - a) the inadmissibility of a matter (Rule 18);
 - b) the closure of a debate (Rule 19);
 - c) the adjournment of a debate (Rule 20);
 - d) the suspension or closure of the sitting (Rule 21);shall take precedence over other requests to speak.

Only the following shall be heard on these motions in addition to the mover: one speaker in favor and one against.

2. Speaking time shall not exceed one minute.

Rule 17 - Points of order

1. A Member may be allowed to speak to draw the attention of the President to any failure to respect Parliament's Rules of Procedure. The Member shall first specify to which Rule he or she is referring.
2. A request to raise a point of order shall take precedence over all other requests to speak.
3. Speaking time shall not exceed one minute.
4. The President shall take an immediate decision on points of order in accordance with the Rules of Procedure and shall announce his or her ruling immediately after the point of order has been raised. No vote shall be taken on the President's decision.

Rule 18 - Moving the inadmissibility of a matter

1. At the beginning of the debate on a specific item on the agenda, its inadmissibility may be moved. Such a motion shall be put to the vote immediately.
2. If the motion is carried, Parliament shall immediately proceed to the next item on the agenda.

Rule 19 - Closure of a debate

1. A debate may be closed before the list of speakers has been exhausted on a proposal from the President or at the request of a political group or two thirds of non-attached members. Such a proposal or request shall be put to the vote immediately.
2. If the proposal or request is carried, only one Member may speak from each political group which has not yet provided a speaker in that debate.
3. After the speeches referred to in paragraph 2, the debate shall be closed and Parliament shall vote on the matter under debate.
4. If the proposal or request is rejected, it may not be tabled again during that debate, except by the President.

Rule 20 - Adjournment of a debate

1. At the start of a debate on an item on the agenda, a political group or two thirds of non-attached Members may move that the debate be adjourned to a specific time. Such a motion shall be put to the vote immediately.
2. If the motion is carried, Parliament shall proceed to the next item on the agenda. The adjourned debate shall be resumed at the specified time.
3. If the motion is rejected, it may not be tabled again during that part-session.

Rule 21 - Suspension or closure of the sitting

The sitting may be suspended or closed during a debate or a vote if Parliament so decides on a proposal from the President, at the request of a political group, or two thirds of non-attached Members. Such a proposal or request shall be put to the vote immediately.

CHAPTER V - COMMITTEES

Rule 22 - Procedure in committee

1. A committee may validly vote when one quarter of its members are actually present. However, if so requested by one sixth of its members before voting begins, the vote shall be valid only if the majority of the component members of the committee have taken part in it.
2. Voting in committee shall be by show of hands, unless two thirds of a committee's members present request a vote by roll call.
3. The chair may take part in discussions and may vote, but without having a tie-breaking vote.
4. Rules 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21 shall apply mutatis mutandis to committee meetings.

Conciliation Committee

As part of the co-decision process, the Conciliation Committee, meeting at 10:15 AM on Saturday, seeks to bring members from the Joint Council of Ministers, the Plenary Session of the European Parliament, and the Commission together to negotiate a compromise on disputed proposals. The emphasis should be on finding consensus on these issues so that all sides can agree on modified proposals. If compromise agreements are reached, the modified proposals will then be submitted for approval to the 1:00 PM meetings of the Joint Council and European Parliament. The goal of this co-decision process is that the final draft resolutions of the Joint Council and Plenary Session of European Parliament will be as much in accord with each other as possible.

In the Conciliation Committee, the President, Vice-President, and Rapporteur of the European Parliament, and the Political Group Chairs, will represent Parliament. The President and Rapporteur of the Joint Council, along with one minister from each of the remaining Member States (chosen by the States themselves) will represent the Council. The Presidents of the Council and the Parliament run the meeting jointly. Before the general meeting begins, the two Presidents, with the aid of the two Rapporteurs, should review the two resolutions briefly to locate areas of disagreement. The general meeting should then address these areas in search of compromise agreements. The President of the Commission and two other commissioners selected by him will represent the Commission and be present as advisors to the Committee. Other ministers who are not part of the Committee will meet with their individual Heads of Government/State. During this period all other MEPs are to attend party meetings led by the Political Group Vice-Chairs.